

REMARKS

Upon entry of the above amendment, claims 1 and 5 will have been amended. Further, claims 6-15 will have been newly submitted. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections together with an indication of the allowability of all pending claims, in due course.

Although Applicant does not agree with the rejections set forth by the Examiner in the outstanding Office Action, Applicant has nevertheless amended the claims to clarify an aspect of the reinforcement structure of the present invention. Thus, in view of the previously submitted reasons, as well as the reasons set forth herein, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner pass the present application to issue, as the present invention is clearly patentable over the references applied by the Examiner.

In this regard, Applicant submits that an aspect of the reinforcement structure is to include a lower member that is downwardly and forwardly curved with respect to the reinforcement structure. The reinforcement structure also includes a vertical member that is connected to the lower member at the narrowest portion of the lower member. In addition, the lower member includes side fixing portions that are substantially greater in height than a height of the narrowest portion of the lower member. Accordingly, with such a configuration, the reinforcement structure is configured to provide improved rigidity and shock absorbance against a vertical load.

However, Applicant submits that the references applied by the Examiner fail to disclose at least the above-mentioned features, as recited in the claims. More specifically, Applicant submits that there is no indication in PLESCHKE that the bumper transverse support is downwardly curved or that extends forward from the reinforcement structure, as recited.

Rather, as illustrated in Figure 1 of PLESCHKE, the bumper transverse support 5, which the Examiner has interpreted to be the claimed lower member, appears to have a substantially uniform cross section. Further, the sectional view of Figure 2 clearly depicts the bumper transverse support 5 as having no downward curves or forward bends in its rectangular structure. In addition, the bumper transverse support 5, as disclosed by PLESCHKE, does not include a narrowest portion along a central region thereof or within a region in which the vertical member is fixed, as recited in the claims.

Further, Applicant submits that WYCECH is directed towards providing a composite laminate beam 12 with a flat, planar structure. The laminate beam, as disclosed by WYCECH, however, does not protrude forward from the reinforcement structure, as recited in the claims. In addition, the composite laminate beam of WYCECH does not comprise a substantially continuous curve, as recited in claims 14 and 15. Rather, the outer shell of the composite laminate beam of WYCECH is structured to include sharp, distinct edges.

Thus, as the applied references neither anticipate nor render obvious the combination of features recited in the claims, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejections together with an indication of the allowability of

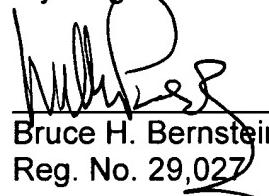
all pending claims. Accordingly, an indication to such effect is respectfully requested and believed to be proper.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests an indication to that effect. Applicant has argued the allowability of the claims and have pointed out the shortcomings of the applied references. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the recited claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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